(c) RBI has reported that a number of steps have been taken to increase the flow of credit to agriculture sector which, *inter alia*, include :

(i) Within the overall target of 40 per cent to priority sector, 18 per cent of net bank credit is earmarked for agriculture, Public Sector Banks which have not achieved the agricultural lending sub-target of 18 per cent of net bank credit as on the last Friday of December, 1994, are required to make contributions to the Rural Infrastructural Development Fund equivalent to the shortfall in achieving the sub-target subject to a maximum of 1.5 per cent of their net bank credit;

(ii) Prescription of scales of finance for crop loans worked out for each district and their uniform adoption by banks;

(iii) Disposal of loan applications upto Rs. 25,000/- within a fortnight and those over Rs. 25,000/- within 8 to 9 weeks;

(iv) Commercial banks to set up at least one specialised Agricultural Finance Branch in each State to deal with high tech agricultural loans;

(v) Introduction of the Agricultural Credit Card for farmers with good track record to enable them to secure production credit from banks without procedural formalities each season; and

(vi) Delegation of appropriate sanctioning powers to the rural branch managers so that majority of loan applications from weaker sections are sanctioned at branch level itself.

[English]

Waiver of Bank Loans to Sugar Mills

5593. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount of loan extended by different public sector banks to the sugar mills and is due as on date;

(b) whether the Government have taken a decision to waive the loan taken by those sugar mills; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by banks in that direction so far ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) As per information available from Reserve Bank of India, the Gross Bank Credit of Sugar Industry of all scheduled commercial banks, outstanding as on the last Friday of March 1995, was Rs. 3007 crores.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Financial Assistance to Projects

5594. SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the details of the amount provided by IDBI/ICICI/IFCI and other financial institutions for the projects sanctioned by or sponsored through the national Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation during each of the last three years, project-wise and State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI), Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) and Industrial Reconstruction Bank of India (IRBI) have reported that they have not received any proposals for sanction of financial assistance to projects sanctioned by or sponsored through the National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation.

Sonepur Bazari Open Cast Project

5595. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the present position of the Sonepur-Bazari Open Cast Project;

(b) whether this project is running behind time schedule;

(c) if so, the details therefor; and

(d) the time by which the project is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) to (d). In Sonepur Bazari Opencast project of Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (ECL), initial delay of about 6 years occurred due to delay in getting physical possession of land and the work at the project could not be started as per project report approved by Govt. in July, 1983. After possession of land, the implementation of the project is progressing satisfactorily and as per revised cost estimate sanctioned by the Govt. in January, 1995, the project is expected to be completed by March, 1997 as per revised schedule.

Capital Market

5596. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the foreign investors have shown their reluctance to invest in the Indian capital market;

(b) if so, whether any memorandum has been received by the Government in this regard ;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of Government in this regard ?